



# AIRWARD NEWS

**In Recognition of Professional Performance during a Hazardous Aviation Event or Significant Contribution to Aviation Mishap Prevention**

October 2003

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## **Copter on a Stick**

(or a good reason to pay attention to your marshaller)



A relief pilot, relatively unfamiliar with the helibase, was landing the Bell 206L-III at the Ashland helibase to pick up passengers for a recon flight. While the helicopter manager was busy making a radio call the pilot apparently did not recognize the landing area until the helicopter was almost directly over the pad. The pilot turned the aircraft and started to land directly over a metal fence post. Seeing the imminent danger the marshaller, John Petroff and the fire extinguisher tender, Katie Lash frantically waved the helicopter off

and then directed the pilot to a safe landing on the proper landing pad. Proper CRM (Crew Resource Management) demands the active participation of all members of the aviation team, in this case the pilot, the helicopter manager, the marshaller, and the fire extinguisher tender. It's very likely that without the alertness and quick reaction of John and Katie these congratulations could have been a catastrophe. [OAS SAFECOM 03-473](#)

## When You Need a Helping Hand, He'll Be There



Helitack Crewmember Trevino Stevens, Jr.'s quick thinking and courageous actions on July 26, 2003, saved Helicopter Manager Floyd Walker and Helitack Squad Leader Kristy Johnson when the Bell 206L-III in which the two were riding crashed during an initial attack mission. Stevens was guiding the helicopter into an unimproved landing spot when it suddenly crashed through the trees. He ran to the crash site and found the helicopter crumpled on its left side with a ruptured fuel tank and the passengers pinned inside. He assessed the condition of the victims, extinguished a fire that had started near the engine, and pulled the survivors clear of the

aircraft. He then radioed for help and provided first aid and comfort to the victims. He continued to help with recovery after the emergency team arrived and, in the days that followed, provided extensive assistance during the accident investigation. Mr. Stevens' selfless and heroic acts on July 26, 2003, clearly saved Mr. Walker and Ms. Johnson and are in keeping with the warrior spirit of the Apache Nation and the highest traditions of wildland firefighters.

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## Clever Pilot & Aviation Safety Alert Make Great

Photograph not  
available of  
actual pilot



**Safety  
Alert!**

World Wind Helicopter Pilot Richard Threlfall was prepared on August 12, 2003 when the AS350B2 helicopter he was starting suddenly and unexpectedly became airborne. The collective locking mechanism unlocked during the hydraulic accumulator test. Threlfall, however, was prepared and reacted immediately and decisively to avert an accident. He modestly attributes his actions, in part, to the Aviation Safety Alert issued on 05/19/03, which alerted pilots to this potential problem and advises them to guard the collective during this hydraulic test. According to Dennis Brown, R-5 RASM, "Richard's correct and immediate response to this situation definitely resulted in an incident with potential rather than an accident." [USFS Safecom 03-558](#)



## Going the Extra Mile



Rod Dykehouse (left) presents airward to Steve Markason (right)



Dennis Brown (right) presents airward to Rich Ludke (left)

The North Fork Link and Marble Air Operations Staff nominated Steve Markason and Rich Ludke for going the extra mile on developing a comprehensive Aircraft Mishap Response Plan and then putting it to the test. Steve, the “ASGS-T” first completed the plan then Rich the “Deck Coordinator” added the Organization and Responsibilities, including alternatives. They developed a simulation utilizing a Bell 214 at the helibase. The scenario involved the response to an on-helibase accident including a battery fire, grass fire around the helicopter, and the evaluation and extrication of injured personnel. Participants included the Helibase Manager, Aircraft Base Radio Operator, ARFF contract personnel, EMTs, Medical Unit, and helitack assigned extrication duties. This kind of preplanning and hands-on training does not occur as frequently as it should. Writing down a plan and just discussing it is not enough. You've got to do it in a simulation to ensure you've learned the proper response. We feel it should be made a requirement in the IHOG as a standard helibase requirement to be accomplished within a reasonable timeframe from start-up. Good job, Steve and Rich!!!

## Softich Springs to Action on Helibase



BLM Salt Lake Helitack Supervisor John Softich (sof-TICH) didn't hesitate when he noticed a possible tag line between the belly hook and bambi bucket while managing a helibase on the Cascade II Fire. He immediately addressed the situation with the parties involved and the “tag” line was removed. According to Jim Morrison, R-4 RASM, “John's response may have very well prevented the next accident involving a Bambi bucket contacting the tail rotor of the helicopter. This same scenario was the causal factor in an accident last year.” Our hats are off to John for remaining vigilant throughout a busy season. Although others on the helibase noticed something looked strange, John was the first to get answers and fix the problem. It really drives the point home, “If you see something, SAY something.” September 25, 2003. [USFS Safecom 03-877](tel:8018778777)

## Vehicle Accident Requires Aerial Medivac



The Wallowa - Whitman N.F. nominated Glenn Miller, Blue Mt Team ATGS, for an Airward for his assistance with a medivac mission. Just prior to sunset on August 28th, Glenn was called to assist with a vehicle roll-over accident in a remote, steep canyon bottom on the Haas Ridge Incident. Emergency medical personnel were dispatched to the scene via helicopters, along with a National Guard UH-60, hoist extraction unit with night vision capabilities. Initially, communications were marginal at the

scene of the accident but Glenn quickly established and maintained positive communications between the Incident Command Post (ICP), Emergency Medical Technicians (EMT's), helispot personnel, and all responding aircraft. Of particular concern was a wire hazard adjacent to the only potential helispot, in what was quickly becoming low light (dusk) conditions. Glenn successfully relayed significant helispot approach information, relating to the wire hazards, to each of the three responding helicopters. He also provided specific instructions to helispot personnel, and adequately monitored and relayed all critical incident communications. Glenn's true professionalism, calm demeanor, and attention to detail assisted greatly in the success of this medivac and reduced the likelihood of an aviation mishap. Great Job, Glenn! USFS [Safecom 03-711](#).



### Aviation Safety Offices

[http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/av\\_safety/](http://www.fs.fed.us/fire/av_safety/) -  
<http://www.oas.gov/oassafety/>

